

**TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW OF FRANK GAFFNEY
PRESIDENT, CENTER FOR SECURITY POLICY
BY PETER BEINART, ATLANTIC MAGAZINE¹
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Peter Beinart [PB]:

So, it is okay if it is on the record?

Frank Gaffney [FG]:

Absolutely.

PB:

Okay, great.

FG:

I am assuming so.

PB:

Okay, great. So I am just gonna [starts recording] . . .

FG:

You and me both . . .

PB:

Okay, good, that's great. So, I wanted to start by asking a little bit about, you know, events, you know, from a long time ago now, but obviously there has been some controversy about them. So I wonder if you could just tell me from your—just tell me about when it was that you started to have concerns about the Grover Norquist's operation, the Islamic institute, and how that kind of played itself up leading up to the, kind of, events of 9/11.

FG:

¹ This transcript has been edited only to remove “um’s” and “uh’s,” with brackets reflecting clarifications and insertion of hyperlinks to show materials shared by Mr. Gaffney with Mr. Beinart.

I guess, on reflection, concerns probably started before I was really conscious of them. Because I would attend his Wednesday meetings in his previous—well now, two removed—facility on 18th street. And, there would be people in the room who I didn't recognize as conservatives or even as Republicans for that matter. But I didn't think a whole lot of it, and when he broached the idea of us sharing office space—because we were both looking for it at the same time—I jumped at the chance really because I thought one of the benefits of it would be that we would share a conference room that he wouldn't use probably much other than Wednesday mornings and we could use on other occasions that would be convenient to the work we do. And about a month after we moved in, one of my colleagues came to me and said –

PB:

This would have been 1990?

FG:

This would have been 1999 I think.

PB:

Okay.

FG:

[The aforementioned colleague said] “do you know that there's a Muslim Brotherhood front on the other side of that Xerox room?”

PB:

Would that have been Michael Waller? [Unintelligible]? You don't want to say. You're not saying no, you just don't want to say. That's fine, that's fine.

FG:

But suffice it to say,, it concentrated my mind, and the more we looked into it as an organization, the more persuasive it was that there was, in fact, a problem there. And that involved the guy whose seed money helped fund it, found it, Abdulrahman Alamoudi. It included his right hand man, who was its Executive Director, Khaled Safouri. It included a member of their board of directors, son of one of the founders of the Muslim Brotherhood in North America, Suhail Khan. It included others as well.

And it included some of the public policies that they were promoting—notably, the idea that if federal prosecutors believed on the basis of classified information that an alien should be deported from the country, that they did not need to disclose that

classified information to the alien, as part of the deportation proceedings. This was so-called “secret evidence.”

PB:

Right . . .

FG:

Which it turned out that the abolition of it was the, the repeal of legislation that Bill Clinton signed in, I believe, '96, enabling that information to be withheld because, after all, you not only would compromise the information itself, but quite possibly the source and methods by which it was obtained.

The prohibition or the repeal of that so-called “secret evidence” was a top priority of Suhail Khan and of Khaleed Safouri and most especially Sami Al-Arian, with whom they worked. And then, we watched as this operation became involved in the Bush 2000 campaign, specifically Khaled Safouri became Muslim Outreach Coordinator for the Bush campaign. He outreached to his old boss, Abdulrahman Alamoudi, and a bunch of other Muslim Brotherhood operatives. Brought them into the [Texas] Governor’s Mansion in the May of 2000, as a matter of fact. Arranged for a meeting between Sami Al-Arian and George W. Bush in March of 2000, at the Strawberry Festival, I believe in Plant City, Florida.

And then things progressed from there to the point where in the second debate with Al Gore, kind of out of the blue, George W. Bush said, “We need to do something about secret evidence.” And we subsequently learned that, by Grover Norquist’s own admission, as I recall, to the *Wall Street Journal*—that Karl Rove called him twice in the course of that debate to make sure that his Muslim friends understood George W. Bush had given what I believe amounted to a quid pro quo for Sami Al-Arian’s support. And, therefore perhaps, that of other Muslims who were under his influence, many of whom seem to be associated with the Muslim Brotherhood or, in his case, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, as we learned out subsequently.

So, for all of those reasons, what Grover was doing in that organization, what people were doing in his office space, what he seemed to be enabling through his association with them and through his bringing them into things like the Wednesday Meetings, was all a matter of concern to me, so I began consulting with other people, who I respected and I shared my concern.

PB:

This would have been in 2000.

FG:

Well, as I said, it started when we moved in together. My recollection is 2000, 1999; I can't quite keep it straight. I think it was 1999. And then, as I say, as the campaign built up and they became more prominent in it, those concerns became more heightened.

PB:

Did you ever go to Grover Norquist and say, "look, you know, I have these concerns, what are you doing, and this is bothersome."

FG:

He confronted me at one point and accused me of all kinds of things. But my recollection is until he attacked me publicly, I didn't say anything publicly about or to him. My concerns were such that it was pretty clear to me that it wasn't out of ignorance that he was doing all of this and so I didn't see much point in impressing upon him how much of a problem I thought it was.

PB:

Why do you say it wasn't out of ignorance?

FG:

Well, because what he was doing was clearly helping people whose associations, if you troubled yourself to check them out, were problematic to say the least. That was true most especially of Alamoudi, who subsequently of course in September, declared his support for Hamas and Hezbollah at Lafayette Square. It was true before then. Khaled Safouri had been identified as an operative of the—I can't remember the name of the group—but it was involved in Bosnia.

PB:

The American Task Force for Bosnia.

FG:

That's it, thank you. And it was, it had been identified, as I think you know, by I think intelligence services as a, an operation of the Islamic supremacists.

PB:

But wasn't the Anti-Defamation League involved in that task force?

FG:

I don't know, but I would tell you that the Anti-Defamation League has strayed pretty far from its mission, in my experience. And it has been involved in lots of things that—some of them, I think, seemingly, as in this case, perhaps, motivated by the kind of sentiment that I had at the time—which, is you know, it is outrageous that we are allowing Serbs to murder Muslims, or for that matter Catholics or others, and so, it may have been nothing more than that. But I will tell you that the ADL, as you probably are aware, has attacked me and a lot of other people for pointing out the problems with Islamic-supremacism. It is a kind of bizarre thing because there is no more anti-Semitic operation in the world today, I believe, than Sharia-supremacism.

PB:

So and then on 9/11 itself, I've read a fifth of the report of the report you did on Norquist, it talks about those events. So, he says you know that he wasn't there that day, that he took the red eye in, he went home, he wasn't there. So, I am just interested, how would you respond?

FG:

Did you get that from him, by the way?

PB:

Sorry?

FG:

Did you get that from him, that he came in on the redeye? And then he went home?

PB:

Well I think he said that publicly.

FG:

Well, I am confused, because, frankly, he has lied about this repeatedly in different ways, and that is the most interesting of lies, because that indicated, as I thought, that he came in on the redeye. Now, if you follow the story, Peter, the reason that the Muslim Brothers were meeting at the White House was to take delivery of George W. Bush's promise in that second debate with Al Gore, that he would do something about secret evidence. And, you may have seen this in the [dossier](#) that we did, but, it is important to note that Sami Al-Arian, at the Islamic Society of North America, the largest Muslim Brotherhood front organization in the United States, I assume you are familiar with [this document](#)?

PB:

Yes.

FG:

Okay. Well, if you are, then you perhaps know that under the heading of our organization and organizations of our friends, they cite as the number one group in the United States, the Islamic Society of North America. So, at that conference, Sami Al-Arian, knowing that Suhail Khan is coming up to speak immediately after at the time then in the office of the Public Liaison of the White House, and this is all on video, if you are interested. [Unintelligible] against the fact that the President had not yet delivered on the quid pro quo. And, as I recall, asked for 100,000 let's say, emails, phone call—faxes, back in the day they did that sort of things, letters, to the White House, demanding that the President do something as he promised to do about secret evidence. And he whipped himself up into such a frenzy that Suhail came up next and said "Oh no, no we got it, we are working [it]." And indeed he was. And I think probably against the backdrop of that hectoring, Suhail was able to get a date on the President's calendar for a meeting with the Muslims who were interested in this issue. It seemed to be, without exception, Muslim Brotherhood types.

PB:

So, how do you know they were all Muslim Brotherhood?

FG:

Just on the basis of the list that I have seen of who was being admitted to the White House, I believe for this meeting.

PB:

How did you get the list?

FG:

I don't remember its provenance to be honest with you. It doesn't have a date on it, so I am a little unclear if it is the list. But it is a list of Muslim folks and, the first name on the list is Grover Norquist's actually. Khaled Safoori's was the second.

PB:

But you are not sure that is the list.

FG:

I don't know that it was. But the people that I saw coming into our office were Brotherhood types.

PB:

Do you recognize them individually?

FG:

I noticed some of them, who were recognizable, but—

PB:

Do you remember who besides?

FG:

I don't. The two that I recognize of course are Suhail Khan and Grover Norquist. Which brings us to your question. The day that was selected was, of course, September 11th. They were apparently supposed to go in for pre-meetings, presumably to have conversations with Karl Rove and I don't know what else, but in any event, they were going in earlier. And then the White House complex was of course closed because people flew planes into buildings.

And they decamped to the office, then the conference room that I shared with Grover Norquist. And to the best of my knowledge, he has not denied that that meeting has taken place. He has simply denied that he was there, and frankly, it is not material to the story whether he was there or not—I saw him go into the room, you can take my word for it or you can take his word for it.

But it is interesting that he initially said—not initially, it was years after this first came up, he said I guess it is five or six years ago—that he couldn't possibly have been there because he was flying around, trying to land, and then he couldn't possibly have been there because, I think he actually said at one point that his plane was diverted or, in any event, that it was impossible for him to be there because the logistics didn't work out.

It was quite clear to me that what he had done because he had had a speech in San Diego, as I recall, the night before. He caught the red eye back. If he caught the red eye back, he would have been on the ground in plenty of time to drive into Washington D.C.

But here is the point Peter. Let's just say for purposes of discussion that he actually was on the East Coast of the United States—Baltimore, Washington D.C. or wherever he landed—there is, in my professional judgment, and it is nothing more than that,

not a snowball's chance in hell that he would have missed that meeting at the White House. Because it was *his* meeting. It was *him* demonstrating his chops to the Muslim Brotherhood. It was *him* establishing with the White House, yet again, his ability to deliver this constituency they had cultivated in the campaign, and then were encouraged to do more of after 9/11. He would have been there.

He had been working on secret evidence with Suhail Khan for years. He won, he got an award from Sami Al-Arian for his work on secret evidence. He is proud of that award. This was not a meeting he would miss if it was humanly possible. The fact that his staff tells you that he didn't go into the office that day doesn't mean anything to me. Maybe they didn't see him, I'd like to think that they wouldn't lie about that, but he could perfectly well have done what I saw him do, which is walk off the elevator and go directly into the conference room with Suhail Khan, wrapping up the back of this gaggle of Muslims, some of whom I believe were unquestionably of the Brotherhood stripe.

The reason we also know—and I think you've talked to Michael Waller so he may have told you this—that it was Brotherhood is that they had a heated discussion about a joint statement condemning the attacks of that day. Did Michael tell you this?

PB:

Yes, and I have also watched in your course [www.MuslimBrotherhoodinAmerica.com], so I've seen and

FG:

Okay. Well then you know the story. But the point is that people who say that attacking the Pentagon is not an act of terrorism because it is a legitimate military target are the kind of people that I worry about as Islamic supremacists. And the fact that that's the kind of people that Grover and his friends were hanging with and trying to get into the White House to see George W. Bush is just, I think, further reaffirmation of what I am saying is a very problematic operation.

PB:

Now, it seems that so, Waller heard this stuff, you know, from his office, but it doesn't seem like that, unless I am wrong, that he came forward, you and he came forward to talk about that until later. Did he tell you, right away, "Oh, I heard this stuff in the office," but then, or why did you then only publicly come out with that information later. Or—

FG:

You know, if he told me at the time, I think I would have remembered it, so I don't think he did tell me at the time. My recollection is that I first learned of his daring to monitor this conversation when I was making a presentation about all of this in a meeting where he was in attendance that was probably I don't know the exact date now—6 years ago I would say, when did we do the course?

PB:

I think it was 2010?

FG:

2012? Yeah, I think it was the beginning of 2012.

PB:

So, you were giving a talk about, and you talked about that day and then he said "Oh, you know I, this also happened." Do you remember who the presentation was to?

FG:

It was a briefing that we were doing here. People.

PB:

For staff?

FG:

No, no, no. For people outside, but I don't remember exactly. But I am interested in your intense focus on this.

PB:

Well, I am going to let go of this. Only journalistically because it is kind of a nutty story, to be honest. I mean, I just think that journalists tell stories and this is a kind of crazy story, you know?

FG:

You know what is craziest about it?

PB:

I am not saying you're crazy. I am just saying that, the fact that, whatever, it is just . . .

FG:

The whole thing is incredible, and if I hadn't lived through it myself, I wouldn't believe it probably, any more than had I not occupied office space adjacent to and sharing a Xerox room, sharing a conference room, I would have believed that Grover Norquist would have a Muslim Brotherhood front in his organization. But he did.

And here is the kicker: the only reason I know about that meeting, Peter, is I did something that I never did at any other time that I can remember in 7 years of being in that office space. And that is I was standing in the doorway of the office, with the door open, and frankly, I can tell you what I was thinking: it was "What the hell do we do?" Do we stay here, four blocks as a 757 flies from the White House, which we're told have surface-to-air missiles that can bring down a plane quite possibly on a building like ours? Or, do we take our chances out on the street, in that circumstance, which you may remember was a little unclear, to say the least.

PB:

Yeah.

FG:

So, I was wrestling with that and, lo and behold, the elevator doors open and out come these folks and, bringing up the rear was Suhail and Grover. But again, you know, it's, it's interesting and if –despite the other lies that he has told about so much of this you wish to credit him – it really doesn't make a difference in terms of the fact that that group of people migrated to my office space and were observed doing so by me and were overheard by one of my colleagues saying jihadist things.

And, what's really important—though I can't prove that it took place there—but what is really important, I think is, coming out of that meeting was, a perfect example of what, of what an operator like Grover Norquist specializes in. And that is, how do you make lemonade for your clients out of lemons, like 19 of their co-religionists killing 3000 of our countrymen?

And, what did that involve? It was two things, again if you've taken this course, you've seen I guess the point, but just to impress it upon you. One is, you tell the President of the United States, through Suhail Khan or directly to Karl Rove as the case may be – given that you are Grover Norquist and you have access to both – that if you don't want a clash of civilizations here, Mr. President, we are going to need to do some things to kind of manage this perception that you're interested in mounting a "crusade," as you said, it against all Muslims.

Well, those two things, two things are: One, you have yourself seen, in the company of Muslims. And we have volunteers to be seen with you, at the Washington Islamic Society, for example. Or at the White House. And [two] there are just a few things that it would be really very resonant with Muslims if you were to say, like "Islam is a

religion of peace” and “the Koran is about peace and good” and “jihad is about personal struggle, not about violence,” and the “people who hijacked those planes were trying to hijack a great Abrahamic faith,” and on and on and on, Peter.

And you’ve heard it. And I have to tell you, I believe, again as somebody who takes this stuff pretty seriously and follows it pretty closely—whether you agree with my conclusions or not, I hope you’ll give me that—from that day to this, literally, 9/11 on, we have made a pretty significant hash-up out of so much of this because, I think in part, George W. Bush was induced to say things that I believe are not true, and was associating himself with people who were telling him things that were not true; [and] was signaling to Muslims in this country that the leaders of their community are, as they claim to be, Muslim Brothers.

And [he was guided by] the kind of agenda that the Brotherhood was going to say is acceptable, when it comes to dealing with, you know, this problem of “violent extremism,” and what is not permissible. And, lo and behold, you know, we’ve done things that are permissible as far as they are concerned, and we have not done things that aren’t. And it just has gotten infinitely worse under Barack Obama.

PB:

Can I go past Barack Obama to the guy whose going to be President in a few days?

FG:

Skip Barack Obama?

PB:

Well, make you happy. Well, just because, I am also conscious of the limited time. So, I was interested in how you became connected to the Trump campaign. There was a report that you, that the Center for Security Policy did a briefing for the Trump campaign, for Candidate Trump before the Iowa caucuses. Can you how did that, can you say anything about how that came to be?

FG:

Well, it’s not correct. Before Donald Trump became a candidate, he was obviously interested in becoming a candidate but he was not yet one, he asked to come to an event that we held in Iowa. I don’t remember the exact date, I think it was June or so of 2015.

PB:

Right, which was just before he announced.

FG:

Shortly before he announced. It was a program that we put together, actually one of four that we did in other interesting states. We called it a “national security action summit,” [in] which we showcased some of the people at the national level who were working on various aspects of national security, including the jihadist business but not exclusively that. The electric grid, Russia, China, you know, the need to rebuild our military, missile defense and nuclear forces, so on. And we would bring in, wherever we could, local people who were either expert in their own right or otherwise involved in these issues. He asked to have a chance to sit down with our speakers before he spoke. So we arranged that.

PB:

So, he wasn't speaking at your event, he was, or he was speaking at your event?

FG:

He was speaking at the event. And the speakers that he interacted with, some of them work with the Center and some were friends and allies of ours, others were people who were, I think, in that community. But it wasn't in any way proximate to the caucuses.

PB:

Right, it was long before, I see. So, can you just tell me, did you know him before? How did he get...who was it from his group that came and said “I really want to be part of this.” How did that come to be?

FG:

I had met him a couple of times but just, you know, in passing. He would not, I think, have remembered it. I believe that whoever was, you know, organizing his proto-campaign at that point—I don't know if it was Corey or somebody else—but they reached out to, as I recall, the guy who was staffing it for me and I didn't have any interaction with him at all about it until we got there.

PB:

Can I ask who was staffing it for you?

FG:

A fellow by the name of Tommy Waller.

PB:

Waller?

FG:

Yea, no relation to Michael.

PB:

So, he gave his talk and also, beforehand, you and some other speakers kind of talked to him about these issues. Can you tell me anything about the nature of the conversations, what some of the things that you addressed were?

FG:

Well, because I was the master of ceremonies for this thing, I was more out of it than in. But I think he just gave people an opportunity to give him the short treatment of what they were going to talk about, I think he asked some questions and I gather he found it interesting.

PB:

Are you at liberty to say who some of the other folks were who were in those conversations?

FG:

Hmmm. I don't think so. Their names are listed on the schedule of who participated but it was some of them, not others, not honestly I don't remember everybody who was involved.

PB:

You also had a relationship with Kellyanne Conway, formerly Fitzpatrick, for a while, right?

FG:

I've known her for years.

PB:

Was she at any point of connection between you guys and the Trump campaign, or was that just independent.

FG:

No. We worked with her for years on polling at various points. We didn't do a lot of it, but when we did, I think she is the best in the business, so I always go to her. I think I first met her actually when we were doing some focus group work with Frank Lutz, for whom she working at the time, so it goes back a long time.

I think the only intersection, Peter, as you probably remember, is that she did a poll for us, we were interested in, as part of the work we do on what we call the "counter jihad," the attitudes of Muslims in the United States. And we engaged her to do two polls, actually: one was public sentiment of non-Muslims, or the entire population, including some Muslims, I imagine. But, one was a more detailed look at what a population of Muslims who self-selected because she told me that was the only way that you could really do this, as a practical matter, through an opt-in kind of survey approach. That was the first time we had used that approach, and it was at her recommendation.

And it was, it was most interesting when subsequently, news organizations like the one you work for, caviled about the fact that this is heretical and unorthodox and [an] outrageously unscientifically way to survey people. I have been struck by how many news organizations—I think including CNN—are using opt-in surveys, certainly the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, ABC and others do. Because, you know, as a practical matter, more people have cell phones, they don't have landlines, and they don't talk to people who are calling them that they don't want to talk to, and all the rest of it, it's the only way to get responses.

So, anyway, Kellyanne did that survey for us, I don't remember the exact date, but it was months before Trump spoke about it in connection with his idea that, referring to our data, that we had a significant fraction of the people that we surveyed saying they thought it was okay to use violence to advance the faith, or something to that effect. And that, I believe it was 51% of those we surveyed said Muslims ought to have the right to be ruled by Sharia rather than the Constitution of the United States. He said, you know, I'm not sure we actually want to be bringing in more people like those, and until we can figure out whether they are or whether they are not, we ought to just not be bringing in more Muslims.

And because he referred to that poll, in making that statement, that statement became wildly controversial. So did the poll, so did we, and so on. But that was the point of intersection—Kellyanne was not working for him at the time, I know she knew him.

PB:

Do you know how he got connected to the poll?

FG:

No, I don't. I don't know. I'd like to think it is just the sheer quality of the work.

PB:

Were there other points during the campaign—or once the campaign started, after that Iowa event—where you or people associated with the Center briefed him or people in the campaign?

FG:

Well, not that I know of in any formal sense, people that are in the campaign, or were in the campaign I should say, a number of them were friends of mine. So we've interacted in that period. And I think that is probably true of others in my staff, but I don't know.

PB:

Steve Bannon is someone who you've known, right? I saw that he interviewed you. Can you tell me about how that relationship played? And you went from the *Washington Times* to Breitbart, if I am correct. Can you give background of how you got connected to Breitbart?

FG:

We made a film for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting called "Islam vs. Islamists." To address a question that was part of a competition that the Corporation was doing at the time. I think it was 1996, no, 2006, sorry, 2006, called "America at the Crossroads." [We proposed] to try to suss out the answer to a question a lot of people have had, which is "if there are so many moderate Muslims, how come we so rarely hear from them?"

So, we [produced] – a team that I was part of putting together – a proposal, was one of, as I recall, 440 contenders, selected to be one of thirty-five that actually got to make a treatment of the film and, refine the proposal, and then was down-selected to be 1 of 20, then was actually going to air their film on PBS. But it profiled 9 of these, as I recall, 9 of these, if you will, anti-Islamist Muslims, and showed to varying degrees, what their lives were like often made very miserable by the Islamists, the Brotherhood and other stripes, in their communities.

And just at the moment when PBS was supposed to begin the process of airing these films, it took over the whole project and insisted that we were not being fair to the Islamists. And, when we pointed out that this film was really not about them, it is

about the anti-Islamists, they wouldn't hear it, and they wanted it changed around, and we refused to do that, and they refused to air it, and it became a great controversy because that kind of censorship seemed to be really part of what we are concerned about, with respect to the Islamic supremacists.

So, as a result of the controversy, a guy by the name of Steve Bannon, who I met at some point, out in Hollywood as I recall, who at the time had a company that, among other things, was selling DVDs, approached us about selling "Islam vs. Islamists." And so we signed up to do that, but that was my first interaction with him. And then when he moved out here and became involved in Breitbart, our paths crossed because we have lots of mutual friends and a lot of common interests. And he was helpful in a number of respects, including offering me a place to take my column when one of Grover Norquist's friends, David Keene, terminated it after 25 years [at the *Washington Times*].

PB:

Have you had any, you know, did you talk to him during the campaign at all about, you know, the foreign policy agenda that you believe in? I mean, did those conversations continue after became involved in the Trump campaign.

FG:

I think I saw him the day that he was brought into the campaign. At least the day after those events or something like that. And I don't believe I saw him after that.

PB:

Have you talked to him since the luncheon?

FG:

Yeah, on occasion.

PB:

So more than once since November, or whatever it was.

FG:

I'm not going to get into a lot of detail on that.

PB:

Okay, but, but talk to him on occasion, okay. I wonder, can you say anything more about your interactions with—I know you are not formally on the transition team,

but there have been reports that you, you know, maybe having some discussions and influence. How, what kind of, what kind of role have you been playing since the...

FG:

I have no formal role at all. Suggestions to the contrary are inaccurate.

PB:

But, are you involved in conversations with folks who are on the transition team?

FG:

I don't want to get into it, Peter. I mean, as I've said, I have friends who are people who work in various capacities, did in the campaign, transition, and, I'd rather not be specific about, you know, my contacts with them, either as friends or as professional colleagues.

PB:

What... how likely do you think it is that the new administration will designate the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization?

FG:

I don't know. I think they should. There's certainly been indications they are inclined to...

PB:

What indications?

FG:

Well, Donald Trump said on the 15th of August, that was among the things that he thought was necessary. Walid Phares talked about it after the election. I gather, that is now being circulated again, in connection with CAIR's attack on Franklin Graham as an inauguration speaker. But those are to the best of my knowledge of the public indications of—

PB:

Have you had private indications?

FG:

I think I am clear that I am not going to get into contacts . . .

PB:

Okay, that's fair enough. Fair enough. I wonder if you—one of the things that struck me, just going back looking at some of President-elect Trump's statements during the course of the campaign, was I thought actually—beyond just the “Muslim ban” that got a lot of attention—there were some other things he may have said that sounded to me like, they were very consonant with work that you had done.

So, for instance, this idea of quote unquote “extreme vetting”—you could ask people questions about “do you believe in Sharia law” or, you know, what are your view about... I don't know..... questions that would get at Islamist supremacism that, you know, that you talk about in that Youngstown speech. And I am wondering if you, or people associated with you, have had a role in helping to craft this speech. Again, it does seem to me as if there is a lot of—you had done a much more elaborate coherent, but there were clearly ideas there that seemed, that I hadn't heard in many other places, so.

FG:

To the best of my knowledge, nobody here, I certainly didn't, was involved in writing that speech. But I think what you are getting at Peter is, is something that, others have noted but not to my knowledge, actually acknowledged. And that is that, I think what Donald Trump represented in the course of the campaign, and, and gave voice to, was a school of national security with respect specifically to Sharia and the jihad that it commands and the supremacism that, it, you know, it establishes is the, duty of faithful Muslims to practice and promote.

That was completely at odds with the views of the Obama administration, I hate to bring them up, but I do want to make sure that you had a copy of, I hope this is the right one. [This \[book\]](#) which is our effort to assess, it actually goes back to the Bush years, but it is a serious drill-down on the alternative that has been the public policy approach, I would argue, going back to those early days of the post 9/11 period, thanks in part to the Muslim Brotherhood's influence. And when you put that set of policies and that sort of direction that it put us on, and the impact that it has had on our, as we call it, first lines of defense, as a contrasting approach to what we think is a more realistic and sober and factual approach.

The only surprise really is that it took so long for somebody to come along and do and say and promise to follow the more realistic approach. But I think that is a testament to kind of the group think and the, and the political correctness as some would have you see it, or, in a way, a kind of *submission*, to the demands of the Islamists.

So, you know, am I gratified that Donald Trump, has given expression to some of the things that we've long believed to be true? Yeah. Do I feel as though we can take any particular credit for it? No. I think there are a number of people who have been saying and advocating these sorts of things that our organization has been about. But, I just, I wanted to present you with a set of these [Center for Security Policy Press Civilization Jihad Reader Series [monographs](#)] if you are interested.

PB:

Sure, I mean, some of it I have read, but some of it I haven't so

FG:

This is the [opus magnum](#) of one of the guys who has been most influential, in our thinking about it—Steve Coughlin. Who helped inform the strategy that we put together.

PB:

Yes, that I did read.

FG:

And the, let's see here, the [Team B \[II\] Report](#).

PB:

Right, I read that.

FG:

This is the [executive summary](#) of it. But this is, this, rooted in what I would call that factual basis which talks about the [Brotherhood's involvement with the Left](#), with the educational system, with [the courts](#) and not least, [CAIR](#), an what it has been doing for Hamas. Actually, this is, I thought it was interesting too, these are sort of our [archival series](#) along with the one about the Brotherhood's secret plan, but the main point is, is: I just hope, if you do anything with any of this, there will be some acknowledgement that as, opposed to the outrageous smears that are sent our way, that you will at least acknowledge there [is] serious scholarship, research, and factual analysis that has gone into what we say and what we recommend about how you deal with Sharia and its adherents.

PB:

So I did read the Team B report. It suggested that, it suggested that, so, under your view, if someone were found to be propagating, espousing Sharia at a mosque, the imam, members of the board, what should happen to that mosque?

FG:

Well, the place we start is by not compounding the problem by bringing more of those imams, or bringing more of those, mosque-builders if you will, into the United States. The thing that is pretty hard to avoid, if you actually do study Sharia, is its jihadism. And, it turns out, we have—*whatever the number is*—we have more jihadists than we can safely live with here right now, let alone bringing more in.

The harder case, obviously, is the one that you asked: what do you do about the people who are currently here, and who are engaged in very similar activities to the kind that people who would like to come here and pursue Sharia-supremacism have in mind? My personal view is that if you start with the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as what it is—a terrorist organization—then it would flow from that that you will hold accountable the people who are associated with that organization, starting with the 29 groups that are [here](#) [see pp. 31-32].

PB:

But what does “hold accountable” mean?

FG:

Well, that’s something to be discussed. But, but it starts with, for example, Number 8 of these groups as I recall, the North American Islamic Trust, which is a [vehicle for] Saudi money to build jihadist mosques in the United States. And you know what is interesting Peter, and you, I know, follow these things at least as closely as I do, if you, I’d invite you to do this, I haven’t done it personally but I believe this is true, if you go back and look at each and everyone of the lone – so-called “lone wolves” – that have been, usually grudgingly, acknowledged to have engaged in jihadism with their violent attacks, I think it is the case that every single one of them has been associated with one or the other of these jihadist mosques.

13 of the world’s prominent jihadists have been associated with just one of them, in Boston. Which interestingly enough, [Sen.] Elizabeth Warren and the mayor of Boston and the U.S. Attorney and the Governor just sent a letter, but, [in] that forum were all embracing the jihadist imam of the mosque, a fellow by the name of Farouq, just before Christmas.

So, you ask the question about how do I feel about Trump taking a different view of this? In part, it’s the starkness of the contrast with people who are intent on saying—as Elizabeth Warren did, and I commend you to hear her speech—in the

end, she said “I will stand forever with the people in this room.” That means with a known, you know, jihadist imam.

So, holding them accountable is, is a place where I would start. I think that, that, the thing that is likely to prove decisive, it seems to me, in how this all sorts out, is: Do we stop embracing and empowering and emboldening and legitimating and, in some cases, at least funding and, in other cases even *arming* these Islamic supremacists? And instead, do we start making clear that, to Muslims who are at the moment trying to figure out whether [the Islamist] are their leaders, or whether they are actually trying to do something to the country that they’ve either come to or are living in that would mutate it beyond recognition if the jihadists’ had their way?

PB:

So would you allow groups like CAIR and NAIT to operate legally?

FG:

I personally would not. Here’s the point, and the thing I just hope you’ll take a look at: [This](#) is the evidence that was introduced in the Holy Land Foundation trial, a transcript of the foundational meeting of the Council on American Islamic Relations. One of the participants of which [Nihad Awad] is still, to this day, the Executive Director of the Council on American Relations, at the time he worked for one of these groups [referring to Number 22 on page 32 of the *Explanatory Memorandum*—the Islamic Association of Palestine.

They put this together in the company of Hamas representatives. At the time, it was not a designated terrorist organization, but the FBI knew that they were no good, so they were surveilling the meeting – back in the day when they did that sort of thing. This is made up of excerpts of the wiretaps, and testimony of a Federal Bureau of Investigations agent about what was meant by it, plus some annotations by us.

But, you can’t help but realize that the genesis of this group was to *wage political warfare* for what has now been, for 23 years, a designated terrorist organization, and to raise funds for that organization. That would make it, I believe, ipso facto, a criminal enterprise, in terms of our anti-terrorism laws. Once it is the case that the Muslim Brotherhood, of which Hamas is of course the Palestinian franchise, is officially designated as such by the United States government, we hope that that would be, clear to everybody is a necessary step. You know, the North American Islamic Trust, stopping the funding of it by the Saudis would be the bare minimum, it seems to me, that we need to insist upon. They are still importing jihadist imams. They are still importing jihadist textbooks. If the Saudis actually want to be seen as on the right side—and there is some evidence that the new up-and-coming Deputy Prime Minister does—these would be the sorts of things that I think we must insist upon and stop, that they stop doing.

PB:

Can you give me a sense of what it is that CAIR is doing, or some of the other, you know, American Islamic Society of North America, that you argue constitutes political warfare against the United States?

FG:

Sure. I would start with "Countering Violent Extremism."

PB:

Their involvement in "Countering Violent Extremism."

FG:

Promoting it.

PB:

Right.

FG:

Insisting that we conform to it. The very, the very fact that something interesting which might be of interest to you, which I think helps explain what they are doing and why it is a problem. I know we are running close on time here but I do want to just show you this.



Okay. So, I would argue, this is the official paradigm of the United States government, under the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood, going back to what we just talked about at length, on 9/11, there is a small group of people that are now called "violent extremists," that have nothing to do with Islam, other than maybe that they are trying to hijack, or pervert, or corrupt or otherwise disguise its real character, because Muslims are our friends, and peaceful religion-followers.

These guys are the enemy, and violence is the fault-line, and if you place the Muslim Brotherhood on the violent-nonviolent spectrum, they are, as General Clapper famously said, a group that has eschewed violence – never mind that Hamas engages in it all the time.



And others do too, or that for that matter. Sharia says violence is the preferred way to do the jihad. It is just that, if you are not strong enough to do it effectively and successfully – especially if it’s counter-productive – don’t do that. Use other techniques, like stealth, or hijrah, or zakat.

PB:

And the people who say that, because CAIR, I look at CAIR’s website, I am not an expert on CAIR. But most days you see things like, you know, “CAIR wishes the Jewish people a Happy Hanukah,” right, “CAIR condemns vandalism of synagogues.” So this is just taqiyya? This is them kind of saying thing for useful idiots to hear that, that the people who work at CAIR don’t actually believe.

FG:

Well, those are your words not mine.

PB:

But I am asking, tell me where I’m wrong.

FG:

I think what you are seeing in those examples, specifically, is the most insidious of all of the kinds of, “civilization jihad,” as the Muslim Brotherhood calls it in its secret plan, which was also introduced into evidence in the Holy Land Foundation. And that is the whole “interfaith dialogue” business. They are appealing to Jews, they are appealing to Christians, they are appealing to others in various degrees, to make common cause with them for the purposes, as Elizabeth Warren was doing at the

Islamic Society of Boston mosque in December—to *protect them* against the actual reality that they are pursuing a totalitarian and seditious ideology under the guise that it is a protected religion.

It's got, it's got, to be sure, a patina of religiosity to it, Sharia does, but 90% by some estimates of it [is] *actually* about political and military and legal practices, And calling for a supremacist program to impose it on everybody else. I think you are aware of this. Anyway, let me just show you...

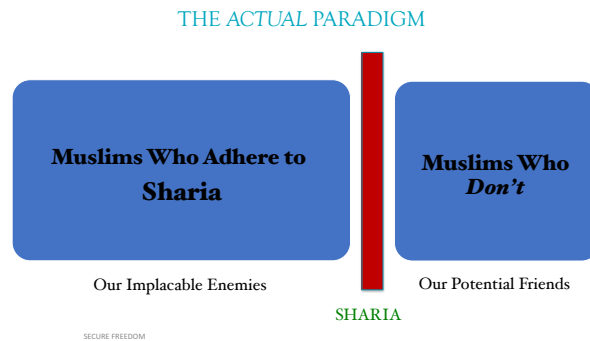
PB:

But that makes these Catholic churches and these Jewish programs also part of this civilizational jihad?

FG:

They are being enlisted in it and they are being used. You know, Lenin used to call such people “useful idiots.” Daniel Pipes put out a piece recently calling them “useful infidels.” And I am not going to disparage their intelligence, but that is not what Lenin meant—he meant that they were duped, they were susceptible to being exploited, and, they were very useful when they were. And I think that’s true. You mentioned the ADL. It’s a prime example of the problem.

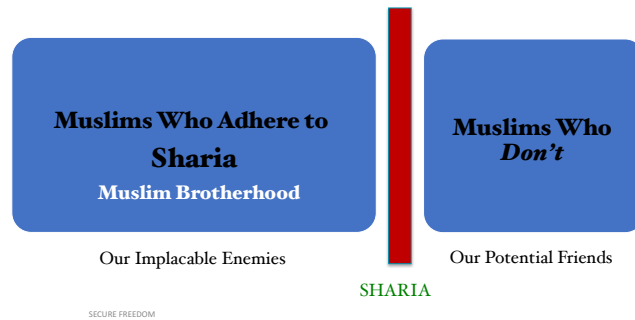
So anyway, just to complete the thought, I think this is the actual reality.



And I don't know exactly how many there are in the Muslims who adhere to Sharia camp versus how many who don't. But I think [that] because [Sharia] is the authoritative rendering of the faith according to its authorities, it is probably a larger group, than that group. I think in this country, it [on the left of the dividing line] is probably a larger group than this group [on the right].

But the fault line actually is Sharia, Peter, that defines whether they are actually enemies of ours or they are potentially our friends. And when you frame it that way the Muslim Brotherhood is on the wrong side of that line.

THE ACTUAL PARADIGM



So what does that mean, when a CAIR or an ISNA or an MPAC or Muslim Students Association or any of the other hundreds of these things—this was 28, 29 groups rather, in 1991, it is probably several hundred now—and the Muslim Advocates and others are people who have been brought into the United States government to promote the false paradigm and obscure [the correct] one. And in so doing, they have, I believe, materially degraded—not only our situational awareness as the military calls it—but our ability to defend ourselves against this *enemy within*.

PB:

So you have, you say you are not sure the numbers, but let's say we have potentially millions or at least hundreds of thousands of Sharia-adherent Muslims in the United States. What do you want to do with those folks?

FG:

That is a step that we will have to address when and if the other steps that I am recommending have been taken. Again, my point is: If you create an environment in which people who believe that, their faith teaches the Sharia thing but they don't want to live under it themselves, let alone impose it on other people. I think that is true of the vast majority of Muslims who are in this country.

But, under circumstances [in] which the U.S. government has been insisting that the Muslim Brotherhood *is* their leadership, when the Muslim Brotherhood comes to them and says "Oh, brother, come into my mosque and we will teach you the ways of Allah, Sharia and the rest," you find those people and—particularly as we discovered in connection with our, aborted effort to make this film for PBS, when they canceled our film and they brought in Robin McNeil to make a film that would go in its place. And he wound up doing this *paeson* to the Islamic supremacists, as I guess the PBS folks wanted.

One of the little vignettes was of [a] human interest story about a couple who had come to the United States, professionals as I recall from Syria, fully assimilated, living the American dream, I think one was a lawyer, one might have been a doctor,

whatever. And yet, the drama was introduced when I think as a result of the second group on this list, the Muslim Students Association, helped the two girls in the family, one in college, I think one in high school, “get back in touch with their faith.”

And then, lo and behold, Peter, they started wearing the hijab, the assimilated parents were horrified. There was a struggle within the family as to whether this was the way they would go. In the end, happy news, the mother decides to start wearing the hijab as well.

That’s the, that’s the, the tractor-beam that I worry about as a result of an American government that is enabling this Muslim Brotherhood effort to dominate the Muslim population. If that tractor-beam is turned off, I have the feeling that a lot of this problem is going to mitigate itself.

Now, not all of it. Some of these are people who may not be legal residents of this country, let alone *citizens* of this country. There are options for what you do about that, if, in fact, they are pursuing and promoting a seditious ideology. Others who are American citizens, you know, that’s, that’s something that I believe the next administration is going to have to wrestle with, because if it can’t be dissuaded, and that, you know, we’re endlessly told people can be de-radicalized, right, then that becomes a public policy challenge. Again, if, if they are posing a threat to public safety or to our constitutional form of government.

The thing is—and I can hear you working on how to take this out of context, so let me just make the context very clear.

PB:

That’s not! That’s not quite fair!

FG:

I hope it’s not. Prove me wrong. My point is this: if we, in fact, are a nation of laws, we have laws on the books that make it a criminal offense to engage in acts of sedition.

PB:

You’ve written that. [Inaudible]

FG:

I’m just saying that that in the context of an interview like this, I just want to be clear. I am not breaking new ground, what I am basically saying is, if I am right, and I hope you’ll trust me when I say this—I’d rather be wrong. I’d rather be wrong

about Grover Norquist. I'd rather be wrong about the Brotherhood. I'd rather be wrong about Sharia. I fear that that's not the case.

And if I'm right—and by the way, I don't mean to make myself sound like I am the only one who is holding these views. As I said, the reason you're here, at least in part, is your intent, I've picked up, the fact that there are "perturbations in the force." That, that people are actually starting to think "Well, wait a minute, maybe this isn't "Islamophobia" or "hatred" or "bigotry," or speech that we can't tolerate in this country as they have been *endlessly* told it is. *Maybe it's the truth.*

And maybe, on the basis of that reality, we are going to have a President who is going to take a different course. I think that's what the American people were hoping for, and that is why they resonated to his campaign, but we'll see.

My point is this: if I am right, then there – it isn't to me, it doesn't have to be to me, it isn't fair in a way for you even to say [that] – I *have to say* what we do about the laws that are being violated?

PB:

We just enforce those laws.

FG: I think that's where you start. And you probably don't have to do them with respect to everyone who might be in violation of them, if, in the process. You know, this is one of the interesting things, Peter. And I better stop with this. One of the interesting things to me is, what has happened so much in the course of the thrashing that we've been going through about all of this for at least 15 years now—is *the power of examples*. You know, it didn't take a frontal assault on every member of Congress who is concerned about the sorts of things we have been discussing the past hour, to persuade every member of Congress, basically, to go along with the "countering violent extremism" narrative, and with not rocking the boat and with not holding hearings until very recently about willful blindness and about the enemy within and all sorts of things.

It just takes making a particularly painful example of Michele Bachmann to do that. When she simply asked the question, "Is there possibly a correlation between the fact that you have people associated directly – or, in some cases, a little less directly with the Muslim Brotherhood but nonetheless associated with it, in positions of trust, either on the payroll or in advisory roles within five federal agencies, and the fact that there are, within those agencies, steps being taken to conform policy to the wishes of the Muslim Brotherhood? She asked, quite, I think, reasonable and again fact-based questions. And she was effectively destroyed, politically, for doing so. And interestingly enough, it wasn't the Islamists so much, Keith Ellison did, it wasn't so much the Democrats.

PB:

You would call Keith Ellison an Islamist?

FG:

I think Keith Ellison has, through his actions, shown himself to be very much an Islamist, an Islamic supremacist, an admirer, friend of, fundraiser for, partner of Muslim Brotherhood front organizations. And, we've got a lot of evidence on that if you would be interested in it.

But the point I am making is this—it wasn't Keith Ellison alone; it wasn't the Islamists he works with alone; it wasn't the Democrats alone; it was the Republican establishment. Most especially, [Sen.] John McCain, who on the floor of the United States Senate, took this woman apart, politically. And, I quite certain, without having read her letters, certainly without any knowledge of what she was writing about. And ever since then, as a result of that one example, you had a course correction on the part of a lot of people.

What I'm hopeful of is, if there is, an example made of some of these people who *unmistakably* are adhering to the Muslim Brotherhood mission statement, which [is] – according to the secret plan, introduced into evidence in the Holy Land Foundation trial, a secret document written for the consumption not of us but the Muslim Brotherhood leadership – namely, the mission of the Muslim Brotherhood in North America is destroying Western Civilization from within, by their hands (meaning, *ours*) and the hands of the believers, so that Allah's religion is made victorious over all other religions.

That's not me saying this, Peter, that's them saying it. So if an example is made of imams who have been actively promoting this, or Nihad Awad of the Council on American Islamic Relations who has been actively promoting this, for the benefit of Hamas, I have the feeling that a lot of people are going to calculate "hey, you know, this isn't the 'strong horse,'" as bin Laden said. And the problem may become a lot more manageable than it has been to date, and that it will be otherwise.

PB:

Can I ask you a couple of more quick questions? I know you are

FG:

You can ask me a couple of quick questions but I'm not sure if I can answer them because I am just about out of time here.

PB:

Ok. Alright. David Keene wrote a column suggesting that you had claimed when you left the Regan administration that Soviet infiltration might have been connected to that? Is that true?

FG:

Connected to what? My leaving the administration?

PB:

To your leaving the Reagan administration

FG:

That's not true. Can I, I have said and written a lot of things, but I don't believe that was the case.

PB:

Did you say, tell people that Grover Norquist was gay.

FG:

I did not. And what difference does it make? I mean, that's something that is constantly thrown up here because one of his pals insists that I said it. I couldn't be more clear that what concerns me is what he does in his office, not what he does in his bedroom. I couldn't give a fig about his sexual preferences, that is not the point. Are we at a point in our history where it is more important what I think about his private life than what I say he is doing on behalf of enemies of our country? I mean, please! That's just ridiculous and I am surprised that you are even paying attention to it.

PB:

The allegations are in writing.

FG:

It's ridiculous.

PB:

I need to know that you are saying it is not true.

FG:

But wouldn't it, wouldn't it strike you as bizarre that somebody is trying to conjure up this image that what is *really* offensive about what Frank Gaffney is saying is that, something about his personal life, when what I am talking about is betraying his country, which I believe he has done.

PB:

Last question: are you catholic?

FG:

I was raised as a Catholic.

PB:

Do you, I am sure people have suggested to you at times that there may be similarities between these arguments you are making about Muslim Brotherhood infiltration and, and some of the kinds of things people said when Al Smith was running for President for instance in 1928 about the way that the Vatican was planning to subvert, that the Knights of Columbus were vehicles for subversion by the Catholic Church and that is fundamentally un-American. How would you respond to that analogy?

FG:

I would say if the Catholic Church either formally or in texts held sacred to its authorities, had anything remotely like the code of Sharia behind it, you might be able to make that case. But it was ridiculous at the time, and its utterly preposterous today.

The Pope, for example, is trying his level best to excuse even genocide against Christians by jihadists. So, I think it is, it is a pretty preposterous claim and I think that's, as I say, not just the case today but was in the past.

But here's my point, Peter, and I do have to stop: I wanted to see you because I think you are a serious guy, I don't agree with you on a whole lot of stuff, and God knows you don't agree with me on a whole lot of stuff, but I think we can agree, we are serious professionals. Whatever our disagreements about, we can agree that we are serious professionals who don't truck with nonsense. I certainly feel that way about me, and I am willing to give you the benefit of the doubt, I haven't seen everything you've ever written or everything you've ever said, but I don't think you make a practice of trucking, I hope not.

What I am laying before you, and I welcome [you] if you'd like, to take any of this with you, is the evidence that what we are saying is true. Drawn from Sharia, drawn

from the Quran itself – and *not* selectively drawn. This is, this is one of those incredible tropes, and it is worth just taking a minute more to say it. As I am sure you know, the Quran essentially follows the arc of the life of Muhammad, with the revelations that he received at various points. Unbeknownst to the vast majority of us who never read the thing, we don't know

PB:

Do you include yourself in that?

FG:

No. I have read a fair amount of it. I won't say that it is committed to memory, but I've read enough of it to understand one particularly troubling piece of that. And that is—it is not organized in accordance with the chronology of Muhammad's life. And that is really important, because not only does it make it largely incomprehensible, to organize it in accordance with the length of the passages. Which, I have the feeling, you know, I'll give you just my two cents on that, I think it was to help conceal some of the true purposes of the trajectory of Muhammad's life—"the perfect Muslim."

My point is this: the authorities of the faith, Sunni and Shia, have largely agreed—I think there are some fine points, as there are always are, on which they disagree—but basically agreed on the chronological sequence of all of these passages. And when you array them, it follows the chronology of Muhammad's experience, from Mecca through the hijrah—excuse me—to Medina, and on, in terms of what he did—excuse me—to conquer the world. Much of the known world, at least.

Why is all that important? Because, I am sure you know, and as we talk about in *Sharia: The Threat to America*, and as is absolutely indisputable, in terms of Sharia—in fact, I think it probably was the genesis of Sharia—is to help Muslims who were not part of Muhammad's personal coterie make sense of two *absolutely contradictory* directions from Allah.

Just to give you an example: one being, to love the people of the book; and the other, to kill them, or at least force them to submit—Jews particularly. So which was it?

And again, as I am sure you know, the way they figured out to make sense of the inconsistencies of Allah was the "principle of abrogation." And that is why the chronology is important. When what comes after replaces what went before, it matters that the last bit was the most violent jihadist part.

So when, as in American universities for example, you can pick up a book and in fact courses in comparative religion often teach from it, called *The Quran: The Early Verses*, it turns out what you're getting is the relatively benign stuff that was revealed, we're told, to Muhammad when he was impecunious and powerless in Mecca.

All of which, all of which, has been abrogated by what he learned from God—the angel Gabriel, whatever—when he became powerful, a warlord, a brigand if you will, and many other things besides, namely, in Medina.

So, in answer to your question, I just want to share with you that, that it is important to me and I think it is important to a honest conversation, whether it is about how we got here under Bush, or under Obama, or where Donald Trump is going to try to take this thing, that that we start with the facts, and we not indulge in either the deflections of people who want us to focus on the shiny dangling object instead of the real problem.

PB:

Which is, you mean, violence.

FG:

Which is violence as opposed to Sharia as the fault-line between people that are potentially our allies in this fight and people who are certainly not. And, we, we not allow ourselves to be reduced to the most superficial of often slanderous characterizations about, people who are serious professionals, and just happen to have on the basis of their review of the facts, come to a very different conclusion. It is so much easier just to pick up the passage out of the latest SPLC hit-piece

PB:

Right

FG:

Or that of CAIR. Or that of the Center for American Progress and just say “Well, I don’t have to pay attention to what this guy is saying, or his team is saying, or his community is saying, or even what Donald Trump is saying because it is just hatred and bigotry. By the way, it makes me feel as [though] I need a safe space, right?” That’s not true. And the trouble with these guys is, there will be no safe spaces for any of us if they have their way. The only safety will lie in submitting to their demands. And I for one don’t tend to do that.

PB:

I know you have to go.

FG:

I have to go.

PB:

You have been generous with me. Thank you.

FG:

Thank you

PB:

Thank you, I appreciate it.

FG:

You have been generous with your questions

PB:

Would it be possible to follow up on the phone if I had a specific question or two.

FG:

Yea.

PB:

Okay, thank you.

FG:

My pleasure

**FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALL BETWEEN FRANK GAFFNEY
AND PETER BEINART**
(Precise date not available, but shortly after January 23, 2017)

PB:

Hi, good morning

FG:

Hi, so Peter I am recording this, as we have for previous conversations, and I look forward to talking to you.

PB:

Okay that's fine. Ok, just a few questions, it won't take too long I don't think. Do you remember what year you started writing your column for the Washington Times?

FG:

You know, my recollection is that I began, contributing to it in 1988 and I think that Mary Lou Forbes, formalized the arrangement in 1989, but that is my best recollection.

PB:

Ok. Ok.

FG:

About 25 years.

PB:

Okay great. At the Wednesday meeting after September 11th 2001, where Grover Norquist got up and kind of spoke on behalf of Suhail Khan, you were there, right?

FG:

I was there at one meeting, and he didn't [just] speak on behalf of [Suhail, he] got up and led a standing ovation for Suhail Khan, whom he claimed had been terribly wronged by unnamed persons.

PB:

Right, right. As it was described to me, you were there but you didn't stand or applaud, is that your memory?

FG:

I am certain of it, yes.

PB:

Okay. Is it true that as a result of the conflict between you and Norquist and Khan, you were removed as chairman of the National Security Committee for the Council for National Policy? This group that meets a few times—maybe three times a year—perhaps back in 2002? Again, these are things that I’ve been told and I want to just confirm whether they match your, your understanding.

FG:

Well, that’s a private organization, and I don’t feel obliged or at liberty really to discuss what goes on inside of it. I will tell you . . .

PB:

Ok

FG:

And, you’ve certainly been briefed on this. I have been systematically punished wherever Grover could do so, for having tried to hold him to account for what I consider to be, intolerably bad judgment and misconduct. And so, whether it’s, you know, the efforts to have me banished from CPAC or whether its having me banned from the Weyrich lunch or having my column taken away, I believe that it’s possible to make a fairly compelling case that this has been something he’s been very actively engaged in, as have a number of his friends. And, you know, it’s one of the prices of doing business I guess, that you find yourself being attacked for trying to tell the truth. And if that is the consequence of it, I am afraid I am going to have to continue to bear that burden. But, I will not stop telling the truth.

PB:

In that notorized document that’s the statement about the events of September, of 9/11 itself and what you saw at the office of American for Tax Reform. You mention that there was a, so, J. Michael Waller, you talk about how J. Michael Waller talked about this conversation in the conference room regarding only condemning the attack on quote-unquote innocent civilians, which you know, then there’s a reference to a subsequent *New York Times* statement that kind of uses that language, so I guess the implication was that maybe that was suggesting the attack on the Pentagon was ok. Do you have a copy of that New York Times statement? I haven’t found it, it doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist. I just, do you know, do you have a copy of the, of the statement that was actually put out in the New York Times or the ad that was bought in the New York Times.

FG:

I don't have it at hand, I don't know if I've got it somewhere in my archives, but I assume that the *New York Times* does.

PB:

Would this be put out? I am also trying to figure out who, I mean, was this statement that you are saying it was put out under the name of the Islamic Free Market Institute? Or under someone else's name?

FG:

I don't have a recollection of it, to be honest with you, Peter. I believe that the way this would've worked would have been as they have done, for example, when Suhail Khan organized the, the statement denouncing Republicans for opposing the Ground Zero mosque, that they just list the names of individuals they might or might not have identified them with their often Muslim Brotherhood front organizations but that depends I guess on the particular, piece but I think, generally speaking, what they do is they try to call attention to the Muslim so-called "leadership" and they do that usually by reference both to the names of the individuals and the organizations themselves.

PB:

Ok.

FG:

I just don't remember this particular episode.

PB:

Ok, ok. Well, I will look, if it does turn up or you have it in your files and you have a copy of it, I'd love to see it.

FG:

To be honest with you, Peter, I am not going looking for it in my files. If you are this determined to write about this particular story, I know that you will be able to put your best efforts to work at it.

PB:

Well, it's fine, I mean, you're the one who cites it in a notorized document, so it's, you've made the allegation that it exists.

FG:

I did. I did make an allegation but I don't feel under any obligation beyond what time I have spent talking to you about all this to keep doing research work for you, if you are interested in the subject, I know that as an investigative reporter you will dig into it, and I hope that you will find the reference that you are seeking. I just, you know, Peter, I got other things that I'm doing rather than chasing this down and look, let's be frank, can we? This is an interesting

PB:

I didn't think we weren't being frank.

FG:

Well, I hope we are. But I just want to be frank with you, as I am hoping you are being with me. **The pursuit of this saga by you, at the *Atlantic Monthly*, I believe, will almost certainly be an effort to once-again repair Grover Norquist's reputation and sully mine.** And, I'm trying to make sure that you have the best information I can provide you, I simply don't have the time at the moment—as there are a few other things going on—to go back and dig out any sort of research that you find is necessary to do this particular piece. And I hope that if you feel the need to do it, you will find it, and I wish you well.

PB:

Ok, that's fine. On November, in a piece in Bloomberg on November 30th, Eli Lake reported—I mentioned this to him when we talked, but I just wanted to make sure that I kind of understood what this was about—so he referred to, he said he wrote, quote, Trump also spent an hour with staff from Gaffney's think tank, the Center for Security Policy, for a briefing on Sharia, hosted before the primaries in Iowa. Now, is that, I know that we talked about the event where Trump went to speak at the National Security Forum, and you told me that he had, you know, asked to speak to talk to some of the speakers beforehand. This thing that Eli wrote, is that, I suppose, is there anything else that that could be referring to besides that? Was there any other time which Trump would have had a briefing with staff from the Center for Security Policy, before the Iowa primaries?

FG:

You may or may not be aware of this, but there were a number of things wrong with Eli's reporting in that piece. I had had a pretty high regard for him as a journalist prior to its publication, and that has been diminished considerably by what he did there. That is one example of something he got factually wrong, I told you the facts, and he didn't trouble himself I guess to explore them.

PB:

Okay. Okay, good, I just wanted to, I just wanted to check on that. So, there was this Fox News report, I think it was on February 28th 2001, where Rita Cosby reported, I think she said quote, because I got a copy, we are told from intelligence sources about an individual who is a liason to the Muslim community, based in the White House, which is the White House's liason, whose father apparently raised funds for someone considered to be the right hand-man for Osama bin Laden. And that was the report that then, that that led to Norquist making this statement at the Wednesday meeting about Suhail Khan. So, it was told to me that you were the source for Cosby. Do you know, do you remember, is that true?

FG:

The last time I checked, I am not an intelligence source.

PB:

So can I take that as saying that you weren't the source?

FG:

Well, I have no idea who her source was, but that is not a description of me. I never worked in the intelligence community and I am not working in the intelligence community, I am not an intelligence source. So you'd have to check with Rita, I'm don't know if she'd tell you who her source was, but that would by definition exclude me, it would seem. And while I was charged by Grover Norquist with that, among many other falsehoods and smears, that one, like most – if not all of them, is without basis.

PB:

Okay. Alright, just one or two more.

FG:

By the way, I suspect where you are going to go with this Peter, is that this was a story that was subsequently, you know, repudiated because I believe it was the Investors Business Daily that had an editorial last on it, and then subsequently issued a correction. To the best of my knowledge, the facts are the facts, that Zawahiri was at the mosque that Suhail's father founded.

But you know, again, I just would ask you if you are in fact, as I think you profess to be, a serious journalist, to take into account all of the relevant information about Suhail Khan's father, Maboob, and whether he was involved in that particular meeting, whether it happened exactly as its been described by Rita and others,

whether it happened when it was said to have happened, whether he had any knowledge of it happening, I mean all of those are very interesting details. But the fellow *founded the Muslim Brotherhood in North America*, that's kind of important. And I think to the extent that Suhail has acknowledged that – at least, [he] has acknowledged his direct role in founding the Muslim Students Association, founding the Islamic Society of North America and other Brotherhood fronts, though Suhail has famously declared that there is no Muslim Brotherhood in the United States, which is *patently* and ridiculously false.

And again, evidence of what we are dealing with here—someone who is, I believe, an agent of that organization and has been for many years and engaged, as ever, in dissembling about it. So, before you make too much of this particular point, and I'm satisfied myself that the statement was true, that Rita made, but I don't know who her source was for it—the point is that if you put this story in the larger context, “me thinks they doth protest too much” when they say that, well that particular fact isn't relevant or isn't so.

As, as with this issue which you've focused a lot of attention on—whether Grover was at the meeting on September 11th—I saw him there, I will attest to it again if you'd like, I would happily debate the point with him but the truth of the matter is *it doesn't matter*—the larger story is what does matter. He was organizing and involved in an effort to get the President of the United States to eliminate an important national security tool, namely so-called “secret evidence,” on behalf of a fellow who subsequently was convicted of terrorism, with Palestinian Islamic Jihad, namely Sami Al-Arian.

There was a meeting in my conference room of Muslim Brotherhood individuals who had been invited to the White House for the purposes of getting from President Bush some further concession on secret evidence on September 11th. I saw Suhail Khan there. I saw Grover Norquist going into the meeting.

But let's just say for the purpose of discussion that Grover wasn't there—the meeting still occurred, the meeting was used, according to the testimony of my friend and colleague, Michael Waller, among other things, to try to do a damage-limitation operation in the press by those participants.

And, you know, if you're focused on the problem and not on deflections from the problem, you'll get this story right. And if you are going to focus on the deflections for the purposes—and I don't want to try to impute any particular motivation to you, but I got to say that, the kinds of questions you have been putting to me suggest that it will be to try, once again, to burnish Grover Norquist's reputation and sully mine— you're missing the point.

PB:

Frank, I'm really, to be honest, to be totally factual: burnishing Grover Norquist's reputation is of utterly no concern to me.

FG:

Good. Nor mine, yet the questioning continues to lead me to the conclusion that is what you are trying to do here.

PB:

All I am trying to do would be, with these very specific question is if I am going to talk some events that are in dispute, it is really important for me to understand the specific claims that different people are making about it—that's all. That's, and that's why I am asking, that's why I ask those particular questions, that's all. I don't want to say that someone alleges something having, without understanding what your claim about that is, that's all. I think as a journalist I have an obligation to get . . .

FG:

Good, well I trust we've satisfied that need.

PB:

Okay, just a couple, a couple more things then I'll let you go. In terms of CPAC so, there's been some, I've been told a bit and there's been some of this stuff in the press about a kind of lifting of the, the informal ban that might have been on you speaking at CPAC John Bolton played a role in. Did you work with John Bolton on that?

FG:

I did not work with John Bolton on that, no. But look, the, very unclear to me what exactly was the formal nature of the punishment that Grover Norquist engineered for me. People associated with CPAC and at the ACU have said there was no formal, resolution prohibiting me from speaking there. Whether there was or whether it wasn't, I can't tell. But what I can say is that I have not been allowed to speak there for a number of years, having received an award from the organization at one point from, ironically, David Keene no less.

PB:

Do you remember which year was it that you, that you, that you received the award, do you remember?

FG:

I have it in a plaque in my office, but I'm not in my office at the moment, I don't recall. I would say it was probably—David was still chairman of the ACU, so whatever date that was—maybe 2004, 2005 something like that.

PB:

Ok. Ok. Ok. And what was the award for?

FG:

Specifically it was for the work that I had been involved in—among many others—on the Law of the Sea Treaty, which David admired and the organization conferred the award on me as a result.

PB:

And you remember the last year that you spoke there?

FG:

Well, it was in the midst of one spasm of this particular thrash but I don't remember how long ago it was frankly. It's been 6, 7 years I would guess, something like that, maybe longer.

PB:

So, I am just interested because another organization I'm writing up a little bit in this piece is Act for America. Do you, have you ever had any interactions with them? Have you ever spoken to them? I mean, do you know Brigette Gabriel? Do you work with her? Do you have any interactions with them?

FG:

I do know Brigette, and I've appeared with her at the Heritage Foundation in fact, one of the, one of my claims to fame I guess is I was sitting next to her when she sent a video virally around the world, in response to a provocation by a, well, what seemed to me to be a Sharia-supremacist at a meeting that we attended together. I've known her for many years—we have, mostly worked together at the level of some of her chapters, , rather than at the national level, but she is a friend and colleague.

PB:

So when you say worked together, does that mean you've addressed chapters of Act for America.

FG:

Oh sure.

PB:

I'm mostly interested, obviously General Flynn was on her board and he gave a number of speeches to ACT you know when his book was coming out last year. I am just interested in how much interaction, if any, you've had with General Flynn, especially on these issues of common interest about Sharia and the Muslim Brotherhood.

FG:

Peter, I don't know, I think I'm not going to respond to that question. I think the, I admire Mike Flynn, I think he is a very good man and he's a person that I think a lot of us in the sort of "peace through strength" community have worked with and interacted with over the years, but I don't want to get into the particulars.

PB:

Okay. That's really all I had.

FG:

Ok.

PB:

Thanks for taking the time.

FG:

Look forward to seeing what you come up with.

PB:

Thanks, take care.

FG:

You too.